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Memorandum

Date : APR 1 1987

From : Director  
Indian Health Service

Subject : Safety Belt Use Requirements

To : All Area Directors  
All Associate Directors

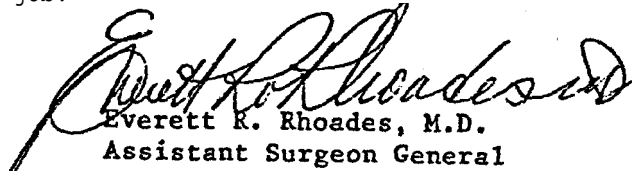
SGM 87-4

Each year thousands of lives are lost and several hundred thousand people are hospitalized as the result of trauma received in motor vehicle accidents. One study estimated that the annual cost to our society is in excess of \$70 billion. Research indicates that only about 15 percent of the motoring public voluntarily buckle up and, when mandatory State laws are passed, this figure rises to about 65 percent. It is estimated that from 9,000 to 12,000 lives per year could be saved if all of us simply "made it click."

On September 26, 1986, the President signed Executive Order 12566 "Safety Belt Use Requirements for Federal Employees." This new policy states that each Federal employee on official business occupying the front seat of a motor vehicle equipped with a safety belt shall have the safety belt properly fastened **at** all times when the vehicle is in motion.

Each of you is directed to ensure that all employees under your supervision are first apprised of the requirements imposed by this Executive Order, and second provided information about the benefits of occupant protection for themselves, their families, and the Indian Health Service (IHS). Further, Area safety policies should be reviewed and updated, as necessary, to reflect the provisions of Executive Order 12566.

I am optimistic that we can reduce deaths and substantially reduce the cost of work time lost by IHS staff, through temporary and permanent disabilities, by placing greater emphasis on encouraging routine safety belt use both on and off the job.

  
Everett R. Rhoades, M.D.  
Assistant Surgeon General

OEHE/DEH